

The Civil War in 1865 and Beyond
National Park Service 2015 Winter Lecture Series
Saturdays and Sundays, 1:30 p.m.
Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center*



Photo Courtesy Library of Congress

Week #1

Saturday, January 3

Robert E. Lee Comes Home from War, 1865 to 1870

Lee came home from Appomattox confronting an uncertain future. He faced unemployment, failing health, and a potential indictment for treason. Yet, Lee's post-war years also represent a remarkable chapter for the once great general as he helped to set the tone for a torn nation beginning the long process of reconciliation and reunion - **Matt Atkinson, GNMP**

Sunday, January 4

"Not Yet!" Longstreet at Appomattox

Join Ranger Karlton Smith and examine the role played by Lt. Gen. James Longstreet in the final movements of the Army of Northern Virginia from Petersburg on April 2 to Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865. This lecture will trace Longstreet's role in the fall and retreat from Petersburg, his reactions to Grant's demands for surrender, as well as Longstreet's return to his home in Georgia. - **Karlton Smith, GNMP**

Week #2

Saturday, January 10

Famous Utterances on the Road to Appomattox: Importance of Rhetoric and Language in the War's Final Hours.

This lecture explores the richer contextual meaning of words uttered in the final days and hours of the war in the East. Because language and rhetoric are so vital in shaping perceptions then and now, it is important to look back at some of the statements made by Lee, Grant, Longstreet and others that helped to define memory of the war. Moreover, these words help us peer into the soul of a generation -- **Troy Harman, GNMP**

Sunday, January 11

"It was, indeed, a scene of unsurpassed grandeur and majesty" – An Audio-Visual Presentation of the National Park Service's Coverage of the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War

Over the past four years, the National Park Service has covered the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War through extensive photography and video projects. From behind the camera, Jason's team of passionate and dedicated staff and volunteers have spent countless hours capturing these once-in-a-lifetime events. They have been used for immediate use on web and social media sites for a worldwide audience and have been saved and cataloged for ages to come. Beginning with the First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run) in July, 2011, Jason will highlight some of the most remarkable and stunning pictures and videos from the past four years. - **Jason Martz, Media Specialist, Northeast Region, NPS**

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Week #3

Saturday, January 17

Rocking the Cradle of the Confederacy - Sherman in South Carolina, 1865

Following his successful capture of Savannah in December of 1864, General Sherman's next target proved to be South Carolina – "the cradle of the Confederacy." The intensity of his next campaign, almost countermanded before it commenced, proved in sharp contrast to his army's advance through Georgia and North Carolina. Opposed by relatively few, Sherman's troops were determined here to leave "a warning to future generations to beware of treason." -- **Bertram Barnett, GNMP**



Photo Courtesy Library of Congress

Sunday, January 18

The Civil War – A Waypoint in Military History

The Civil War provided a transformational platform for innovations in equipment, leadership, procedures and soldiering that had far-reaching impacts on the journey of the American military. While in some instances these changes were immediate, others came with time. All had their roots in the four year conflict. In this one hour lecture we will explore the broad and specific impacts the Civil War had on the American military. -- **William Hewitt, GNMP**

Week #4

Saturday, January 24

What Gettysburg Meant: Civil War Veterans Reflect on America's Most Famous Battle

Few events figure as prominently in the American story as the battle of Gettysburg. In the past century and a half the three-day struggle has come to occupy a central place in our national memory and understanding of the American Civil War. But, what did Gettysburg mean to the Union and Confederate veterans who fought there? How did they reflect on its legacy and meaning in the decades immediately following the end of the four year conflict? Join Christopher Gwinn for a look at the significance of the battle of Gettysburg from the perspective of the men who fought there and lived to tell the tale. - **Christopher Gwinn, GNMP**

Sunday, January 25

If these Things could Talk- 1865

Original objects from the park's museum collection are examined for the larger stories they tell about the war in 1865 and the end of the four year conflict. -- **Tom Holbrook, GNMP**

Week #5

Saturday, January 31

The Final Fourteen Days of Father Abraham

April 1865 marked one of the most dramatic and momentous times in American history. Join Ranger Chuck Teague and discover what Father Abraham experienced as the American Civil War drew to a climax. What would the first two weeks of that month have been like from the perspective of President Lincoln? Where did he go? Who did he meet with? What were his conversations? His decisions? His mood each day? - **Chuck Teague, GNMP**

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Sunday, February 1

"My God! Has the army been dissolved?" The Battles at Sailor's Creek, Virginia, April 6, 1865

In the closing days of the war, a desperate battle was fought adjacent to a slow moving creek ten miles north of Burkeville, Virginia. Nearly one-third of Lee's army, trapped between closely pursuing Union infantry and cavalry, fought a desperate battle that ultimately failed to prevent the devastating blow suffered by Lee's command on the banks of this now tranquil stream. The final days of the Army of Northern Virginia were at hand and a mortified Lee was left to rally the remnants on the road to Appomattox. – John Heiser, GNMP



Photo Courtesy Library of Congress

Week #6

Saturday, February 7

Going Back: Returning to Fields of Glory

After the Civil War, veterans returned to the Fredericksburg area to tour the fields and forests that witnessed some of the war's most brutal combat. Some came to dedicate monuments, make speeches, or share camaraderie with old tent-mates. Each faced the hard reality of visiting a site of grief and glory: remembering friends long lost, recalling sites of hospitals and suffering, and noting great deeds and decisions in otherwise ordinary places. What compelled these men to return to these battlefields, and how did they experience these places that had defined their past?

– Beth Parnicza, Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park

Sunday, February 8

Going Home: The Grand Review and Demobilizing of the Armies

In the spring of 1865, even before all the shooting stopped and well before the government officially declared the war to be over, the United States began the awesome task of demobilizing its volunteer armies and sending the boys home. This program will examine the ways in which it did so and will include a look at the famed Grand Review of the Armies in Washington, D.C., on May 23-24, 1865, a discussion of the problems encountered in demobilizing the armies, and a look some of the experiences shared by Union veterans upon their return home. Topics related to the demobilization—or disbanding—of Confederate forces will also be discussed. – John Hoptak, GNMP

Week #7

Saturday, February 14

"A Peculiar Institution" - A Century of Licensed Guiding at the Gettysburg National Military Park

October 17, 1915 the Gettysburg National Military Park began active enforcement of a newly enacted regulation requiring anyone conducting a tour of the battlefield to be duly licensed. Yet the roots of the uniquely peculiar institution that has become the Licensed Battlefield Guides or LBG's stretch back to the immediate aftermath of the great battle. What caused the War Department to establish licensing regulations and how has the guide force evolved over the past century?

– Frederick Hawthorne, Licensed Battlefield Guide

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Sunday, February 15

"Martyrs of the Race Course" – The Forgotten Decoration Day

On May 1, 1865 Union soldiers, some members of United States Colored Troops regiments, along with thousands of black men and women in Charleston, South Carolina came together to honor Union dead of the late conflict. Confined in an outdoor racetrack turned prison outside of the city, nearly 300 Union soldiers had perished from illness and disease and were hastily and improperly buried. With the fall of Charleston to Union troops, numerous formerly enslaved peoples came to properly rebury these men and plan a ceremony in their honor to remember their sacrifice. Today, the origins of this first Decoration Day have largely been ignored and forgotten. - Dan Welch, Gettysburg Foundation

Week #8

Saturday, February 21

"Injustice must cease before peace can prevail"- Frederick Douglass: The Post-Civil War Years

The self-emancipated Frederick Douglass had long argued and fought for the abolishment of slavery in America, and with the end of the Civil War and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, had seen the ultimate dissolution of the institution. For some abolitionists, the mission had been accomplished and their work fulfilled. Frederick Douglass, however, saw much danger in this moment of joy. For the next thirty years Douglass would continue to fight to ensure that the legacy of emancipation was not lost and guarantee voting rights and equality for the disenfranchised, including blacks and women. In many of his writings and speeches Douglass spoke about the meaning and memory of the Civil War. As many white Northerners and Southerners began to omit slavery and the role blacks had played, Douglass argued that the war had been an "abolition war" and fought to control how Americans would remember the calamitous struggle and what lessons the nation should learn from it.

- Mark Maloy, Frederick Douglass National Historic Site

Sunday, February 22

From the Battlefield to the White House - The Civil War Careers of Post-Civil War Presidents

From 1865 to the end of the 19th century, the United States saw enormous and transformative change, from binding the wounds of civil war to becoming an economic and industrial power. During these decades, the country was led by a variety of men who are often forgotten by historians today. These bearded presidents—Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Harrison, and McKinley—were different men seeking to accomplish sometimes conflicting goals, yet they all shared one similarity: the experience of combat during the Civil War. Their Civil War experiences shaped them as men and as leaders, and they carried those experiences with them in their post-war political careers. Join Ranger Dan Vermilya for a look at the Civil War careers of Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, and William McKinley. - Daniel Vermilya, Antietam National Battlefield

Week #9

Saturday, February 28 –

Monuments that Place Gettysburg in the Greater Context of the War

Gettysburg features several monuments and memorials that place the battle in context with the war's overall meaning. They transcend the battle itself to communicate layered truths easily missed without proper perspective. This presentation will go beyond basic facts, dates of dedication and construction materials to decode monumental messages intended to reverberate through time. - Troy Harman, GNMP



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Sunday, March 1 (Ford Education Center)

(FILM) *Buster Keaton in The General*

This 1926 silent film is loosely based on a true incident that occurred during the Civil War. The story follows the trials and tribulations of Engineer Johnny Gray and the two loves of his life: his girl, Annabelle, and his locomotive. The movie, best known for its remarkable sight gags, also represents one of the earliest attempts to apply humor and comedy to the carnage and destruction of the American Civil War. **Unrated, Runtime: 78 minutes.**

-Introduction to the film by Evangelina Rubalcava, GNMP

Week #10

Saturday, March 7 (Ford Education Center)

To the Brink of Collapse: The Final Campaign of the Army of Tennessee

On March 8, 1865 William T. Sherman crossed into North Carolina with an army of approximately sixty thousand men. Opposing Sherman was a small, feeble force of Confederates under Joseph Johnston. Over the next two months these two men and their armies would make North Carolina the scene of chaos and conflict. This program will explore the last days of the Army of Tennessee in North Carolina as the Confederacy collapsed around and within its ranks.

- Philip Brown, Guilford Courthouse National Military Park

Sunday, March 8 (Ford Education Center)

The Closing Scenes: Admiral David G. Farragut and the End of the Civil War

This program will follow Admiral Farragut from Mobile Bay to the end of the Civil War and examine his part in its closing scenes. The lecture will also explore Farragut's post-war career through his last command to his death in Portsmouth, NH in 1870.

- Karlton Smith, GNMP

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